

Case for Non-Permanent Ban

1. Intro
2. Indefinite Ban (06/24/2021)
3. 1-Year Mark (Attempt #1 to Close the Case)
4. 2-Year Mark (Attempts #2, 3, and 4 to Close the Case)
5. Public Appeal #1 (Pre-Big House 11 Tweet)
6. Public Appeal #2 (Melee Community Ban Appeal)
7. Public Appeal #3 (January 2024 Ban Appeal)
8. NYCMelee Permanent Ban (01/23/2024)
9. TL;DR
10. Apology

-

1. Intro

Hi everyone, it's Hax. As you all know, I currently have a permanent ban ruling being cast against my Melee career. **While I understand why this ruling was cast, I believe it should be overturned due to the extent to which my 2021 ban was mishandled.** I'll be going over my extensive reasoning for this suggestion within this write-up.

I would appreciate it if this write-up could reach the scene's major T.O.'s.

I would also appreciate it if people could read this write-up in full before casting judgment.

This write-up is mainly intended to show people the truth about how [poorly] my initial 2021 ban was handled behind-the-scenes, as well as the mess indefinite bans have the potential to create. I am hoping to prove to people that in retrospect, I did what was expected of me in order to earn reinstatement after being banned in 2021, yet it never happened due to a tremendous lack of due process.

I would ultimately end up getting myself re-banned in January 2024 after deciding to relitigate the case. However, this decision only came after I'd grown increasingly impatient due to the fact that my initial ban had lasted for nearly 3 years, which went well past the initial estimate of 1 – 2 years. This was a true lapse in judgment which could have been prevented had the scene operated on clearly-defined ban lengths, and so hopefully this case can spark change in that regard.

2. Indefinite Ban (06/24/21)

The undersigned have agreed to indefinitely ban Aziz "Hax" Al-Yami on the basis of violating sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.3 of the [Code of Conduct](#) as set by the former conduct panel¹. The text of these sections is below:

2.2.1 (level 2 offense):

Directed and malicious intimidation, harassment, or bullying of any Participant whether by language or conduct.

2.3.3 (note) (level 3 offense):

...malicious gossip with the intent of manipulating the victim's social circle, defamation of character.

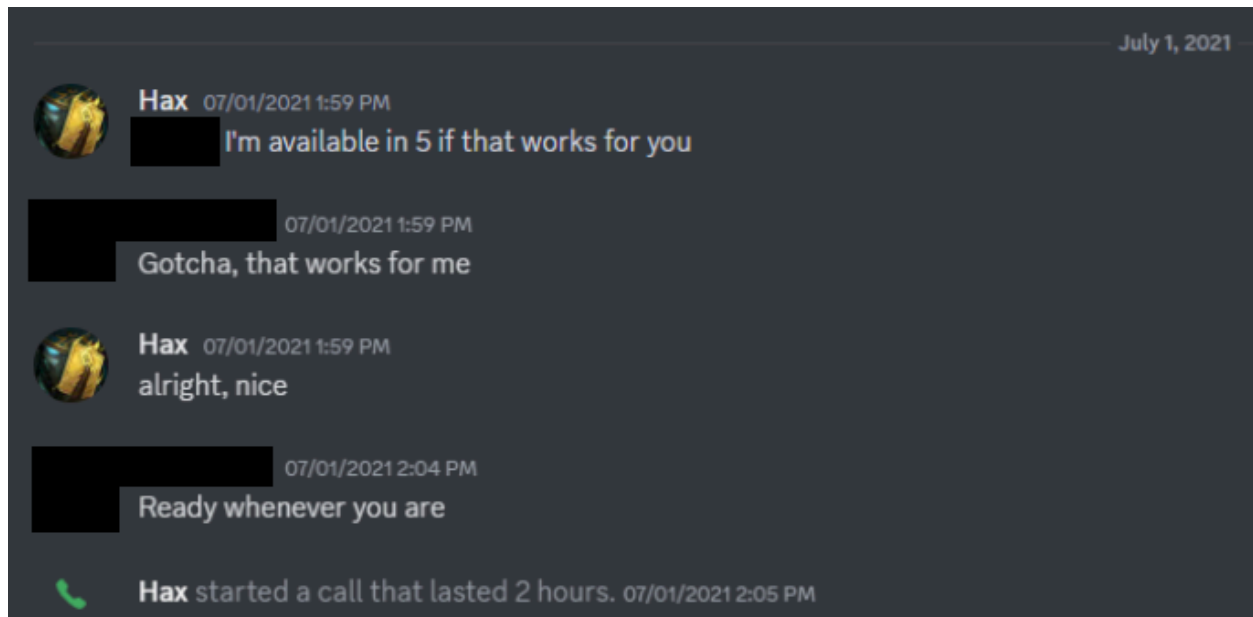
Section 7 of the Code of Conduct suggests the following sanctions for first time offenses:

Level 2: Up to a 6-month suspension from all Signatory Events

Level 3: Up to a 2 year suspension from all Signatory Events

It is with these sanctions in mind that we have agreed that an indefinite ban is justified. Our justification is as follows:

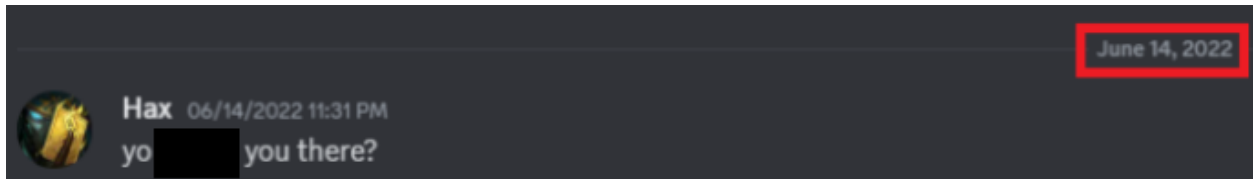
In the summer of 2021, I released a series of controversial videos which resulted in an 'indefinite' ban. My offense was ruled as "Level 3," which carried a recommended penalty of up to 2 years. However, there was an indefinite clause attached as well. **I tried not to think too much of the indefinite clause at first, although I did worry that it would end up causing problems down the road.**



My initial consultation was handled by an anonymous tournament organizer. We had a 2-hour call on 07/01/2021 in which we discussed my case. There were no problems whatsoever with the initial consultation.

-

3. 1-Year Mark (Attempt #1 to Close the Case)



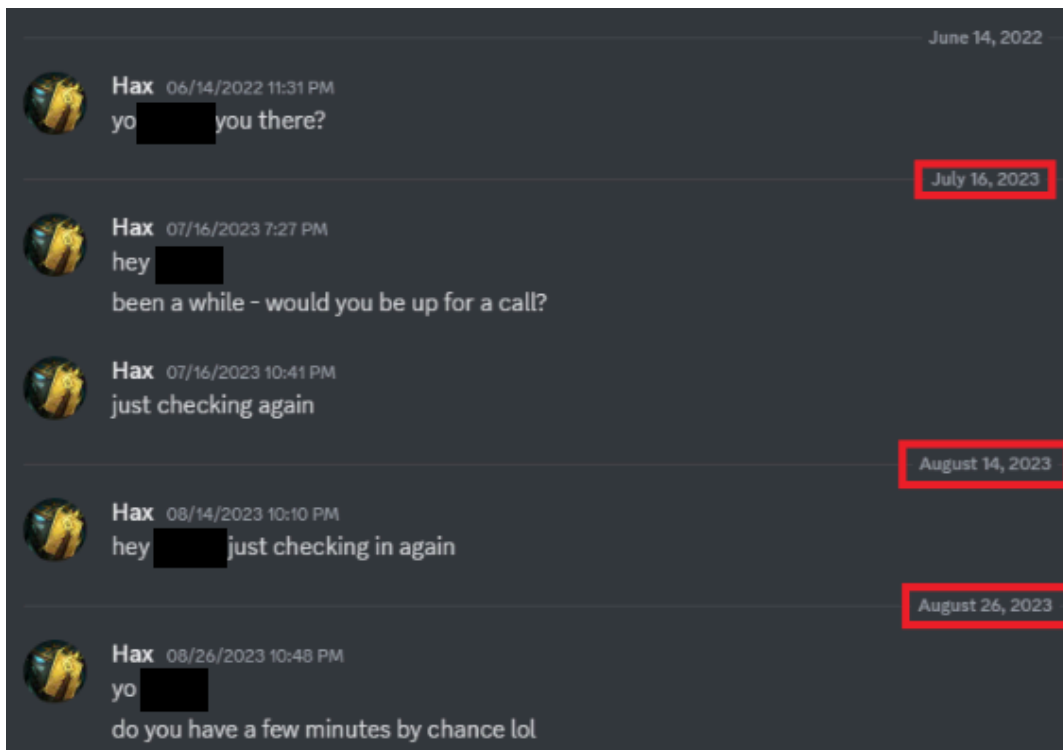
My initial offense was committed on 06/04/2021. **On 06/14/2022, a bit over 1 year past the initial offense, I contacted the tournament organizer in an attempt to close the case.** By “closing the case,” I am referring to receiving reinstatement within the community and becoming able to freely register for tournaments on Start.gg.

Unfortunately, I did not get a response to this message. This signaled to me that within the recommended ban duration of 1 – 2 years, my ban was going to last toward the upper end of the spectrum.

Around this same time, I was informed by my local community that I’d be allowed to return to New York on 01/01/2023, which signaled to me that the ban would last approximately 1.5 years at minimum. This was all perfectly fine by me.

-

4. 2-Year Mark (Attempts #2, 3, and 4 to Close the Case)



As of 06/04/2023, 2 years had passed since my initial offense. **Since the ban statement carried a recommended penalty of 2 years, I sought to close the case with the tournament organizer on 3 separate occasions in the summer of 2023.** Just like the year prior, I did not receive a response.

At this point, the tournament organizer's unresponsiveness had become a huge problem. I had served over 2 years worth of time, and so I had every right to try to close the case for good and receive reinstatement. **However, because the tournament organizer never responded, I would end up having to resort to public appeals in order to suggest that I was seeking to close the case.**

-

5. Public Appeal #1 (Pre-Big House 11 Tweet)

The first public appeal I made was on the night before TBH11. That night, I tweeted to let people know that I missed seeing everyone at big events. Some may remember that this tweet allegedly incited death threats. While I have no idea whether or not that is true, my only intention in making the tweet was to indicate to the community that I was trying to complete the indefinite portion of my ban and receive reinstatement.

This goes to show the problematic nature of the indefinite ban system, as the case should already have been closed as of 06/04/2023. I should not have been put in a position where I felt incentive to make this tweet in the first place.

-

6. Public Appeal #2 (Melee Community Ban Appeal)

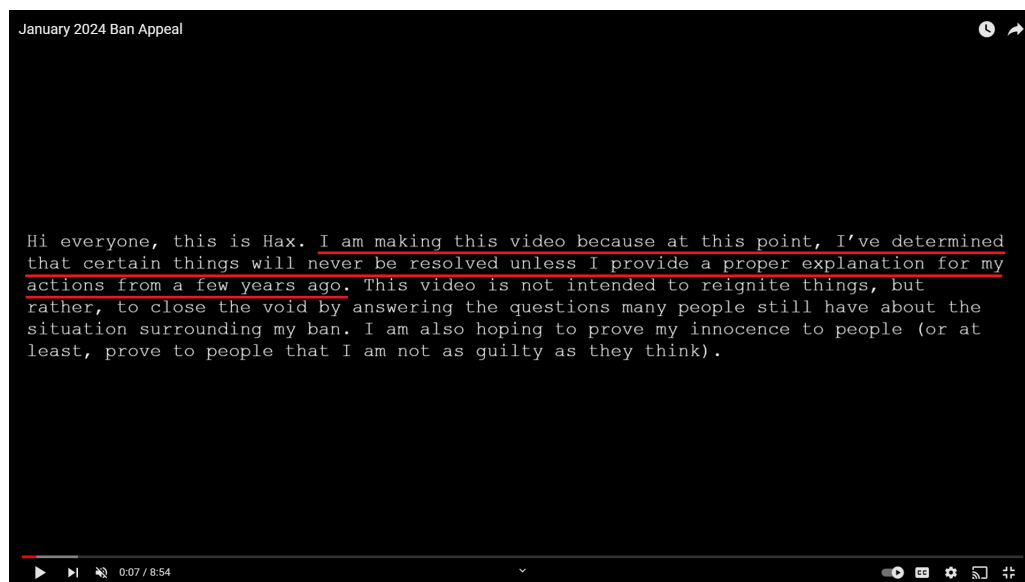


A week later, I followed up with a video called “Melee Community Ban Appeal.” This video was once again intended to indicate that I was hoping to complete the indefinite portion of my ban.

Following the release of the aforementioned tweet and video, I was still being banned from many tournaments. We were going well into the 2.5-year mark by this point, and yet I hadn’t received reinstatement. **At this point, my suspicions about the ‘indefinite’ aspect of the ban were confirmed. It had proven to be highly problematic, as it left me with no reference point for when the ban would cease. This would lead to increasingly desperate public appeals.**

-

7. Public Appeal #3 (January 2024 Ban Appeal)

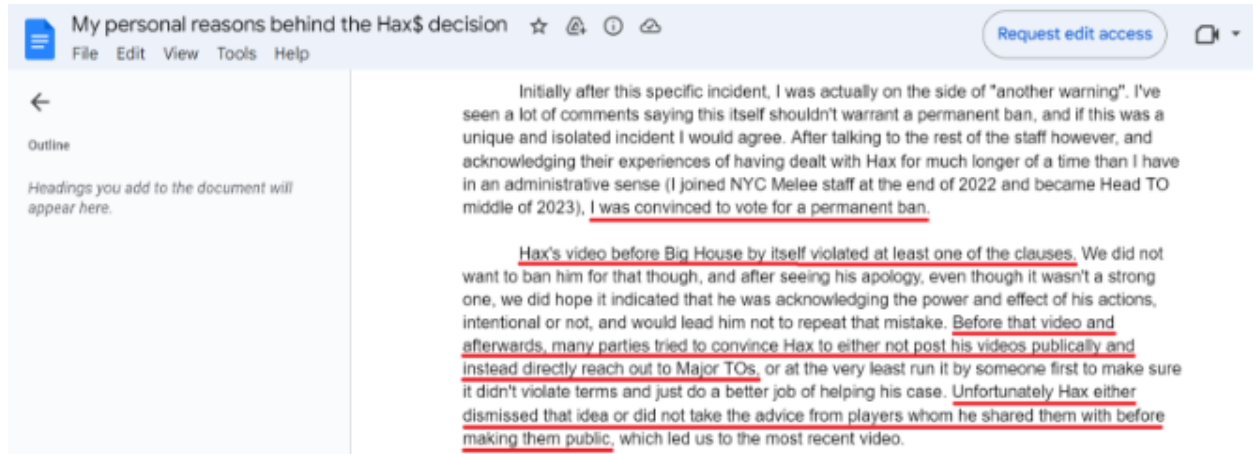


On 01/21/2024, I fatally released a video called “January 2024 Ban Appeal.” This public appeal was different from the previous two in that it sought to justify some of the rhetoric from 3 years prior. This happened because, as mentioned earlier, I was growing increasingly desperate and impatient when it came to finding out what would reinstate me.

My mindset at the time could be seen within the opening lines of the video, which read, “at this point, I’ve determined that certain things will never be resolved unless I provide a proper explanation for my actions from a few years ago.” **After having been rejected from so many tournaments, I genuinely believed that relitigation was the correct thing to do.**

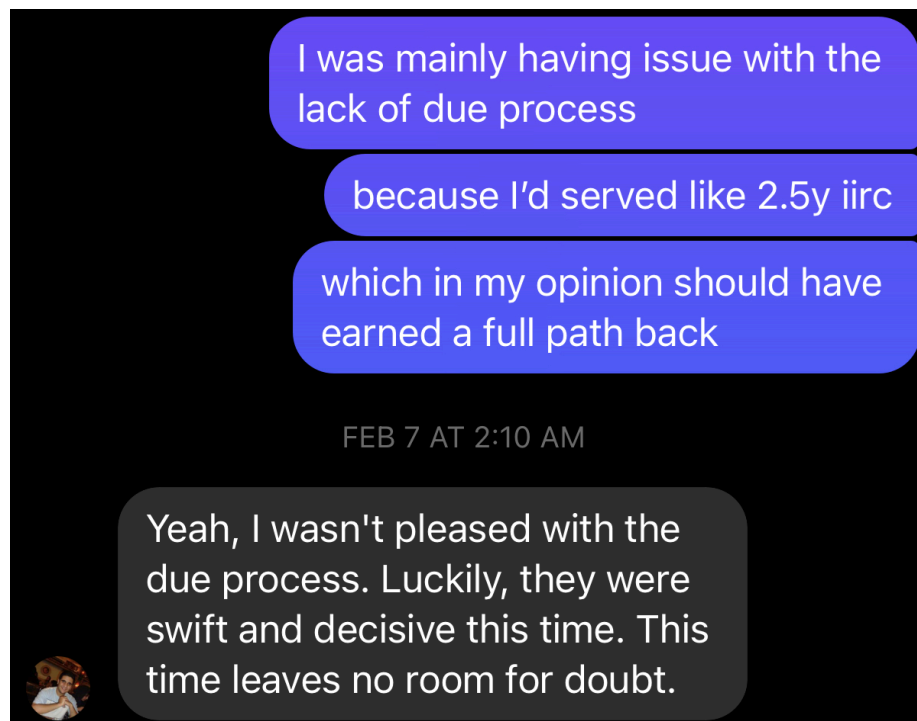
-

8. NYCMelee Permanent Ban (01/23/24)



“January 2024 Ban Appeal” promptly triggered a permanent ban ruling from NYCMelee. The NYCMelee statement also criticized several of my other public appeals for not being kept private, such as the video from October which was titled “Melee Community Ban Appeal.”

What the statement failed to recognize, however, is that I had done everything in my power to close the case privately with the anonymous tournament organizer in the summer of 2023, only to be ignored multiple times. This goes to show the disconnect among the T.O.’s who handled this case, and the overall unprofessionalism with which it was handled. Things should never have reached the point where I was making these public appeals in the first place.



After these events unfolded, I went straight to The Crimson Blur and explained to him that I only chose to create the video which got me re-banned due to the fact that my ban had

exceeded 2.5 years despite the recommended ban length being 2 years. He agreed that there was a lack of due process.

-

9. TL;DR

The moral of the story is that the mistakes I made to get re-banned were invoked by the ways in which my 2021 ban was mishandled, and thus I believe a permanent ban is excessive here. While my decision to relitigate was clearly a lapse in judgment, it was a mistake which only came after my efforts to close the case privately were unsuccessful.

Had I been handed a clearly-defined ban length of 2 years, then the public appeals would not have been necessary and the January 2024 Ban Appeal would not have happened.

Similarly, if the anonymous tournament organizer had responded to my inquiries about closing the case in the summer of 2023, then I would never have revisited the subject and the January 2024 Ban Appeal would not have happened.

Something else I'd like to emphasize is that the decision to relitigate wasn't the byproduct of mental unwellness or anything like that. It was very much a conscious decision I made at the time after feeling that it was the only way to complete the indefinite ban. That being said, it wasn't a wise decision. I apologize for not exerting better judgment even despite the circumstances.

Currently, I've served about 6 months worth of time since these events transpired. I genuinely believe this to be a sufficient penalty, all factors considered. Aside from what I've gone over in this document, I should mention that I've always had aspirations of making a career through Melee, and that I've practically devoted my life to it. I've not only had 4 surgeries because of this game, but I've also developed a company that's dedicated to it.

In closing, I urge the community to overturn the permanent ban ruling. I've been dying to rejoin the community ever since this happened. I hope everyone knows that aside from this controversy, I've always gone out of my way to be of help to the community and to newer players. I truly hope things don't end on this note and that I get another chance to redeem myself, as I won't let the Melee community down if reinstated.

TL;DR the indefinite ban system is the root of the problem. Virtually everything that went wrong could have been avoided had I been dealt a flat 2-year sentence, as I'd served my time and deserved to receive reinstatement.

-

10. Apology

Finally, I would like to apologize to the Melee community and to several of the parties involved.

I am sorry to all of you for what has been a disgraceful past 3 years. I needed to find a way to resolve these issues of mine in a manner which didn't dump my problems onto other people.

To the tournament organizers who I discussed this case with at some point: I am sorry for being of trouble to you. Sheridan, Kevin, Ohan, WillyP - I am sorry to all of you for taking up your time. I hope that we can make amends.

Likewise, I am sorry to NYCMelee for setting a bad example. I would like to deeply apologize to DarkGenex in particular, as he went above and beyond to help me during difficult times.

I also ought to comment on the #FreeHax movement. While I greatly appreciate your support, please do not harass anyone. It'd be best for us to convince people that this unban is deserved as opposed to forcing it.

I hope the community is willing to offer me another chance, as I genuinely just want to lay low and put this in the past. I just want to play Melee, see my friends, and secure a living for my mother and I. I promise that I will turn a new leaf from here on out if I'm kept around, and that I won't cause anyone problems.

To those who are willing to support me even after everything that's happened: thank you. And to those who have their doubts in me: I will do my best to make it up to you in the future.

-Hax